

Mayor's Quarterly Report

(July 2014 – September 2014)

It's my pleasure as Mayor, to submit quarterly progress reports to the community regarding current efforts by this administration. Following is my second report:

Aquatic/Activity Complex (November Ballot) – There will be a question on the November 4th ballot seeking the community's will regarding a one-half cent sales tax that would provide the needed funds to build and operate an Aquatic/Activity Complex. While it is true that the tax is a new tax, it will actually be replacing a one-half cent sales tax that recently expired. This is the result of a very public and transparent process, and as Mayor, I want to convey my deep appreciation to those who have worked so many hours to allow the community to have this opportunity to decide the issue for themselves.

If a majority of voters choose to mark the "YES" box on the November 4th ballot to approve the one-half cent sales tax, the city will build a complex. If a majority selects "NO," we will not. It can only be built if it is funded, and funding is decided by those who go to the polls...so it's your choice. Please get out and vote on November 4th to make sure your voice is heard.

Recently Appointed Staff – I am very pleased to report that although Marshfield is in a transition period regarding a City Administrator...the city is in very good hands. The resignation of the previous City Administrator, David Watson, was handled professionally by both David and the Board of Aldermen. There were no surprises, and no crisis moments. The BOA had already prepared the transitional path by appointing Street Superintendent, Sam Rost, to the post of Deputy City Administrator. Sam has shown exemplary service throughout his fifteen years with the city. Currently, as Deputy City Administrator, Sam has taken over the responsibilities of Acting City Administrator. It's no surprise that Sam is working hard and doing well in his new assignment; however, Sam is only one of three changes in city leadership.

Since my last report, Karen Rost (City Collector/Deputy City Clerk) was asked by the BOA to accept their appointment as the new City Clerk. Karen has been serving in the capacity of acting City Clerk for a few months. She is an incredible resource for the board, and has shown great leadership in her new role.

Most recently, Julie Reike (Deputy City Collector) accepted the BOA's appointment as Marshfield's new City Collector. She has been working in this capacity for the past few months, and has performed very well. Julie is committed to providing the quality customer service to the citizens of Marshfield.

While she was assigned last year, I would be remiss if I did not mention our Financial Clerk, Monica Robinson. I cannot say enough about the super work Monica is doing to help manage the city's finances. This is Monica's first year helping to prepare a budget. It's no easy task. Monica is doing exceptionally well working with the new citizen led budget team.

Marshfield's entire city staff is working hard to adjust to some of the recent changes. Serving our community well is their number one priority.

2015 Budget – Currently, we are in the middle of the 2015 budget preparation. Unlike previous years, the BOA has appointed a private citizen (Hoover Case) as Budget Officer. In addition, the BOA has confirmed four other citizens (Dale Keenan, Tom Spriggs, Sabrina Clair, and Jeremy Loftin) to a Budget Committee chaired by Hoover Case. Our goal is to bring a deeper level of transparency to the handling of city funds, allow a critical look from independent qualified professionals, begin prioritizing expenditures so that those services benefitting the community most receive funding first, and produce a budget that serves the city well in 2015. This is a demanding task for the budget team, city staff, and the BOA, but the result will allow a better understanding of how and why the city spends tax payer dollars, and will allow the city to be more intentional in the way funds are allocated.

Improvements to City Water & Sewer – Thank you for voting to approve the bond issue on the August ballot. The city currently collects 14 dollars a month for Capital Improvements from each utility customer. The approved bond issue will allow the city to move forward with the improvements to these two services by issuing bonds for funding. The engineers for both projects have given input on cost and process, and the city is in the process of applying for the necessary loans. Currently, the BOA is studying the information provided, and laying out a sequence for accomplishing both of these projects in a reasonable time-period.

Strategic Planning – In my opinion, the continued success and growth of our city depends on developing and adhering to a strategic plan. To be useful, a strategic plan needs to be built around a vision. My goal for the first six months of this term has been to work with city staff and the BOA to build a team dedicated to achieving success for Marshfield. The second six months will be devoted to a vision-focused plan for Marshfield that has broad input and wide acceptance. I will be meeting with leaders of business, civic groups, churches, educators, and citizens to work toward this goal. Once we have a common vision, we will begin building the plan. The strategic plan will identify our non-negotiable values, and continued city planning needs to be in alignment with those values and focused on fulfilling the vision. Today, Marshfield is hamstrung by a lack of solid planning. My goal for this term as Mayor is to work with the BOA, city staff, and the community to overcome this obstacle.

Transportation – It's unfortunate that the MODOT Sales Tax issue was not approved statewide. It was Marshfield's best, and only chance, to acquire a second I-44 Interchange in the foreseeable future. I know this to be true because I sat in the room when it was stated by a high-up MODOT official. We will never stop seeking the addition of a second interchange, but it is time to turn the primary focus to other more achievable transportation projects. I want to thank Senator Mike Cunningham, Representative Lyndal Fraker, Commissioners Paul Ipock, Ward Jones, and Denzil Young for working so hard to get MODOT to place the Second Interchange as a priority if the tax had passed...it was a worthy effort.

We are currently holding meetings with the County Commissioners to develop a plan for future transportation upgrades. The meetings are public and anyone is welcome to attend; however, they are very preliminary. I expect updates to the transportation portion of the existing Comprehensive Plan to be a product of these discussions. While we are looking mostly at long term planning, the search for achievable projects that will benefit the city today is always a priority.

Square Revitalization – Two joint meetings have taken place between the city and the county, along with many business owners/operators, and private citizens. The meetings were completely focused on vision-casting for the Marshfield Square, and the result was a list of changes that would greatly enhance its use and appearance. The city and county have been working together since the last meeting to find an achievable project on which to combine their efforts. We are committed to continue this plan to revitalize the city square and achieve the dream. I look forward to our next meeting to move forward on this effort and will be reporting more on this the next quarter..

Additionally, we are working on a project at city hall to design a space on the most prominent wall in the public meeting room to honor those who are currently serving in a branch of the United States military and consider Marshfield their hometown. There will be more information coming, but the hope is to have a nice presentation that identifies each patriot with a photo and information pertaining to who they are and in what position they serve.

The sacrifice made by those who have, and those currently serving, in defense of our nation has always been significant. The purpose of this wall will be to acknowledge their sacrifice by recognizing the investment of Marshfield families, and our community, to the cause of our great nation.

In closing, I want to thank those who continue to volunteer their time and effort to help the city of Marshfield develop into benchmark city we all know it can be. There are many volunteers serving in emergency services, public committees, parks, work projects, or participating by giving input. You are valued, and your sacrifice is very much appreciated.

Respectfully submitted,



Robert Williams

Mayor of Marshfield